

OPENING STATEMENT
U.S. SENATOR LISA MURKOWSKI (R-Alaska)
FISCAL YEAR 2010 LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS
FULL COMMITTEE MARKUP
JUNE 18, 2009

Chairman Inouye, Senator Cochran, I support the recommendations of Senator Nelson for the fiscal year 2010 Legislative Branch appropriations bill. It has been a pleasure to work with Senator Nelson over the past several months on the Legislative Branch Subcommittee. We have been consistent in our efforts to eliminate unnecessary spending, tighten our belts, and help ensure that the Legislative Branch is a model for the rest of government.

While Legislative Branch agencies suggested a 15 percent average increase, the bill before us represents only a 3 percent increase. This would provide a steady-state budget with few new initiatives, but would meet the key priorities of the Legislative Branch. Our staff has worked collaboratively in this process, and the bill as approved by the Subcommittee is a product we can be proud of.

I would like to highlight a few areas. First, with respect to the Architect of the Capitol, the bill funds those projects that address the most serious risks to safety and health – such as repairs within the utility tunnels that underlie the Capitol complex – and projects that remedy deferred maintenance in our buildings. If we don't address the maintenance backlog, the price tag will increase down the road.

The bill continues the Architect of the Capitol's efforts to improve energy efficiency, with over \$14 million in funding designated for this purpose.

Within the Library of Congress, we managed to include funding to begin to update the agency's information technology infrastructure. For a decade, there have been no increases to IT within the Library, yet most users of the Library are virtual users. This was Librarian of Congress James Billington's highest priority. This investment will ensure the millions of people who access the Library through its web site will be able to find what they're looking for.

Similarly, within GPO, we funded the final increment for updating GPO's web site to ensure government publications can be easily accessed and searched.

Also, the bill provides the final increment of funding to complete the merger of the Library of Congress police into the Capitol Police. This project was initiated by Sen. Bennett when he was chairman of the Subcommittee, and has been promoted by each of the successive chair and ranking members to improve security of the Capitol complex.

Finally, there is a directive in the bill for a report by the Government Accountability Office of a study of Capitol Police staffing and overtime. Sen. Nelson and I share the concern that we right-size the Capitol Police, and control overtime spending. Security is paramount, but effective management of the agency is equally important.

Again, I wish to thank Sen. Nelson for his efforts, and those of his staff, Nancy Olkewicz in putting this bill together.

This concludes my statement.